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## Government Says the Champion Athletes Die Young

BY HENRY ROOD.

THE United States government, through its public health service, has issued a sharp note of warning to the parents of hundreds of thousands of young men all over the United States who are striving to excel in athletic sports.

Don't go in for "heavy athletics," warns the government; exercise moderately, but do not try to become a "strong man." And then it adds this significant sentence:

"The champion athletes die young." Considering the fact that 90 per cent of the schoolboys in the United States have distinct ambitions to become champion athletes, and that unnumbered thousands in various outdoor clubs continue that ambition long after they leave school, as well as the further fact that in colleges and universities all over the land it is athletic sports that are talked over and thought of, it is not surprising that the philosophy or science—considering all this to be actually true, the public health service seems to have opened a topic for discussion which is of direct importance to a large proportion of American youths as well as to their fathers, mothers and others vitally interested in the matter.

If it be true that hard, continuous athletic training is a bad thing for the average man; if it breaks him down in early middle age; if it brings on degeneration of the heart, affects the kidneys or lungs, the people of this country ought to be informed thereof in no uncertain terms, for there can be no question that outdoor sports of all kinds are becoming more and more general every year, and that girls as well as boys, that women as well as men, are playing games requiring powers of endurance as never before in the history of the world.

Of strenuous physical exertion in a

score of directions, which their mothers never dreamed of undertaking. That such definite and positive statement should have gone out from a branch of the federal government has caused surprise, especially among the physical directors of many colleges and universities, who have spent their lives in trying to show that athletic exercise is one of the most valuable things a man can indulge in. To be sure, there have been not a few cases on record of men who achieved prominence in various athletic sports, while young and then suddenly died at early middle age, to the surprise of everybody who had seen them in their prime as husky prominent men on the football field, as members of college crews, as star players of base ball, basketball and as medal winners in track events.

It would naturally be supposed that a man who develops physical powers to such an unusual extent that he thereby acquires fame, not to mention the joy of winning triumphs before great multitudes of people, might reasonably be supposed to be far more likely to live to old age than his fellow-student who indulges in the moderate kind and never indulging in hard events or undergoing the rigors of systematic training.

This theory, however, that the athlete lives longer than the ordinary man is by no means proved. The matter is one of such supreme importance to boys and young men all over the country, multitudes of whom are working for a place on high school or college teams, that careful inquiry has been made from the physical directors of such well known institutions as the University of Missouri, University of Wisconsin, Cornell University, Yale, Cornell and Indiana, and they have gladly responded by sending their written opinions.

The men in charge of the physical training of students at such institutions as these possess not merely theory but actual knowledge as to what happens to the young athlete while in college and after he leaves there. It

But Athletic Directors of Such Institutions as Cornell, Columbia, Yale, Wisconsin, the Universities of Indiana and Missouri and the Y. M. C. A. Give Their Opinions of the Statement Which Was Issued by the Public Health Service—They Also Tell What They Think of the Declaration That Men Over Forty Are Dying Off More Rapidly Than Heretofore. What Sort of Exercise a Man of Forty Should Take.



A FAMOUS CORNELL CREW MAKING READY TO START IN A RACE.

seems to be the general opinion that excess in the heavy kind of athletic work is almost as bad for young men as almost any other form of excess.

For example, Dr. Anderson, professor and director of the Yale gymnasium, brings out the fact that while up to the year 1905 "the Yale man who came to high honors in the major sports in the last half century has more than the ordinary man's share of long life."

Dr. Anderson also is in doubt as to whether the college athlete who lives to unusual old age does so because he is highly developed in athletic sports or because of the original strength of the man himself, the athlete being a specially selected man from a specially selected group of American youths.

On the other hand, Dr. James A. Kase, physical director at the University of Indiana, says that in his opinion the trouble with too many college athletes is that when they go into business or professional life they shut down on the athletic training and exercise which they had been keeping up for several years previously and that this sudden change of life from hard physical work to one of little or no systematic exercise is responsible for the serious consequences which follow in too many cases.

"It is my experience that the athlete who is in the habit of training hard and consistently for some time, such as foot ball, and breaking off abruptly is very apt to suffer serious heart trouble. I feel sure this would not be the case if he trained down as gradually as he trained up. I believe that in a great many cases the big, overdeveloped heart which nature has provided during the college career is suddenly left to degenerate, losing its tone and therefore susceptible to various troubles."

"I see no reason why the average man of thirty should not play base ball, basketball and tennis."

"For men of forty-five I would suggest golf, croquet, medicine ball, hand ball, volleyball, etc."

Here is a detailed statement from Dr. Thomas D. Wood, the distinguished authority on physical training at Columbia:

"My own medical opinion, after twenty-five years of experience in this field, is briefly that on the whole men who have taken part in college athletics of all types do not die at an earlier age than other men. Whether the reason for this is that the big, overdeveloped heart which nature has provided during the college career is suddenly left to degenerate, losing its tone and therefore susceptible to various troubles, I do not know."

"On the other hand, I am very confident that a good many of those who become champions in various lines seriously overdo, both in training and in competition, and that a considerable number of college athletes who drop their training and participation in sport too completely and quickly after leaving college are worse off in the

end because they have given so much time and energy to athletics."

"A considerable number of prominent athletes, both amateur and professional, have been subject to degenerative disease, organic in character, and some have died because of organic degeneration, prematurely aged, and others have been invalids for many years. I have known of a considerable number of examples of men who have been distinguished in athletic sports and who have either suffered from organic illness or who have died from such troubles. Just what would have happened to them if they had not participated in athletics at earlier stages it is impossible, of course, to say."

"To state my opinion in another way, then, I believe that excessive indulgence in athletics, particularly if accompanied by sudden cessation of such vigorous habits of life, is deleterious to health in various ways."

"With reference to other questions: The average man of thirty may play base ball if he is in good condition and has kept consistently in training. I doubt whether the average man of thirty should continue to play basketball."

"A man between thirty and forty in good condition and in training is as well, if not better, equipped to row in matches than he was before that time. A younger man in the early twenties is better adapted to the track events. The young man in the late teens and in the twenties has greater elasticity of heart and blood vessels and is less apt to injure himself by quick spurts of effort than the boy of high school age and than the man over thirty or in the forties."

"With reference to the forms of sport suitable for the man of forty or forty-five the more active and more vigorous games, like base ball, basketball, rowing or track, should be discontinued. Tennis in moderation, golf (of course), bowling, hand ball, swimming, moderate rowing (without racing), horseback riding, tramping, fishing and hunting are suitable."

"The average man of middle age with reference to diet should eat sparingly, leaving out alcohol altogether, and limit rather markedly the protein elements in food (of which red meat is the most objectionable). On the whole, however, I believe that abstemiousness in eating for a man of middle age is more important than the question of any particular article of diet."

From the director of physical education at the University of Wisconsin, Dr. George W. Ehler also comes word that he has no available data on which to base anything of value concerning the age at which athletes die.

"There are a large number of Wisconsin alumni who were prominent in athletics twenty, twenty-five and thirty years ago and who are still living, hearty and well," he adds, "and showing no effects of physical or mental deterioration." As to the exercises that can wisely be indulged in by the average man of thirty years Dr. Ehler has some very definite opinions.

"I should consider it unwise," he

writes, "for the average man of thirty to go into competitive sports if he has not been in them previously. There is no reason, however, why a man at the age of thirty, who was in athletics at school or college and has kept himself in condition during the intervening years, should not continue in vigorous sport up to thirty-five, or even longer, particularly in base ball, basketball, tennis, golf, swimming and hand ball."

"Competitive rowing and track events, not including field events, constitute too intense a strain under competitive conditions to be continued with safety after thirty. Hand ball, golf, swimming, boating and canoeing constitute sports that may be continued by the average man till very late in life, provided that he maintains more or less regular and systematic training."

"With respect to diet for the average man of middle age I would say to eat meat not more than once a day and partake freely of fresh vegetables and fruit."

"Appetite and taste are good guides for the man who keeps himself in good physical condition by an adequate amount of daily exercise. The chief protective measure is not to overeat. Avoid experimenting with freak dietaries. Take plenty of time to meals and chew the food well."

Dr. C. V. P. Young, Cornell University's famous gymnasium director, is another authority who says that he has no data which would seem to indicate that the college athletes as a class die at an earlier age than the average man at an early age. Dr. Young contributes the following statement, which is as important as it is interesting, concerning the federal government's warning that champion athletes die early.

"While I know of isolated cases I don't believe any such generalization can be supported by facts. There are some forms of intercollegiate athletics, such as basketball and the quarter and half mile sprints in track, which to my mind have little or nothing to commend them as contributing to the physical welfare of the contestant, and all the more strenuous forms of competition need to be carefully prepared for, and injurious after effects just as carefully guarded against by gradual readjustment to a more sedentary manner of living, but assuming that the amount of exercise is thus gradually decreased I believe the weight of testimony is on the side of better health and longer life for the athlete than for the non-athlete."

"I will say, however, that I believe the best thing about the intercollegiate athletic competition is the stimulus it affords to large numbers of students to participate in athletics and attempt to reach varsity standard, but who never actually do enter upon the extreme form of training and contest."

"The average man of thirty might very properly engage in almost any form of athletic competition, such as base ball (amateur), basketball, rowing and track events, except that I would not advocate continuous athletic training of a strenuous nature for any one. A more or less strenuous athletic event, however, can be undertaken without undue risk up to the age of thirty-five, I should say, provided the individual is of normal development and prepares properly for it. If it be a race it should be repeated only at frequent intervals, but if a game like base ball or tennis it can be carried through a whole season, with lighter forms of exercise during the balance of the year. For the man of forty-five and over I should suggest such forms of exercise as golf, horseback riding, cross-country walking, bag punching and in some cases even more active forms, such as hand ball, squash, tennis, etc."

"With regard to his eating, the average man of middle age needs to be cautioned particularly against drinking too much with his meals and eating too many pastries and highly seasoned foods. The man who never fails to take his daily allotment of exercise in the open air or in a well ventilated room and who does not overload his stomach with food or fluids should be active and energetic at sixty-five, after which time he may be left to act upon impulse."

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The University of Missouri, at Columbia, is one of the middle western institutions where physical training in general, and athletic sports in particular, are given wide and intelligent attention. The man in charge of this branch of education, Dr. C. J. Brewer, has most decided opinions concerning the question as to whether athletes do or do not die at an earlier age than other men. He writes as follows:

"I believe strongly that athletes do not die at an earlier age than other men. I have no definite data to prove this belief, except the records and statistics of the life insurance companies and from data collected by Dr. George Meylan of Columbia University in a study of Harvard oarsmen. This study seemed to prove conclusively that the athlete does not die earlier, but lives longer and in better health than the

average man. Of course, this should be true, as they are a selected class and must be more robust and stronger than the average."

"I am of the opinion that the national health service or any other group interested, if they will thoroughly investigate, can prove to their own satisfaction as well as others the fact that athletics increase the expectation of life. I think the fact that the early death of an athlete attracts attention is responsible for the thought that per-

haps athletics shorten life. Like the minister's son who goes wrong."

"Base ball, basketball, track, tennis and all sports requiring intense effort are not suitable for any one but the young. The middle-aged man must select an exercise or sport such as golf, bowling, riding, walking, fishing, etc., where the effort is leisurely. A man from middle age on must eat more lightly and less meat than during the growing, filling out and athletic years."

One of the most important departments of work carried on by Y. M. C. A. organizations in thousands of cities and towns all over the United States is that of proper physical training for every boy and every man who is a member. During the last few years the international committee of Young Men's Christian Associations has been devoting much time and attention to encouraging athletic sports, and it has developed a very large staff of specialists, at least one of whom is located at practically every large center where the Y. M. C. A. has a home."

Regarding the warning sent out by the public health service, one of the international Y. M. C. A. physical directors, Charles A. Ball, says he has no doubt that in very many cases champion athletes do die at an earlier age than is necessary.

"The fact of the matter is," Mr. Ball continues, "that a lad who gets interested in athletic sports becomes more and more deeply interested as he develops his powers and meets with increasing success, whether at gymnasium work or in the open air. Those, especially in colleges and universities, who show special ability in one branch or another of sport are taken in hand by coaches and physical directors and are aided in every possible way to make themselves doubly proficient."

"Take as a concrete example a freshman in almost any college of considerable size; he goes in for basketball, say, and basketball, in my opinion, is the hardest of all sports in its requirements of heart action and powers of respiration. For this reason, and also because he is played almost altogether indoors and not in the open air, I am not favorably inclined to it excepting in the case of special men."

"When the freshman spends all the time he can at basketball practice little by little he goes into training; as time goes on he develops an enormous appetite, rapidly puts on weight, becomes hard as well as supple, and in his junior or senior year he is not only playing basketball matches with other colleges, applauded by enthusiasts

into business or professional life, where almost all his time is spent in sitting in an office."

He gets very little exercise, excepting possibly at a week end, when he may be able to go out to town to the country. Yet he has the habit of eating heavily; he continues to feed up just as if it were necessary for him to repair the waste formerly caused by violent physical work. In consequence he puts on beef, soft flesh. He gets flabby sooner or later, and in too many instances, being a powerful young fellow, full of vigor, he commences to dissipate a little in one direction or another."

"Because of his vigor and powers of endurance he finds that dissipation does not seem to injure him as it injures the ordinary man, and irrespectively of the fact indulged in he is not unlikely to continue it to a marked extent. This he can keep up until he reaches the early forties, say, when—crack! And away goes his strength and his very life. He is wiped out of existence so suddenly as to shock all who knew him."

"I believe most emphatically for the proper kind of physical exercise for every individual man or boy in the land, and my own personal experience as a physical director for twenty years convinces me that a man should keep up his training and exercise through his entire life. If he is a champion athlete, or anything of a promising championship during young manhood, when he gets into business he should taper down in his training, just as gradually as he worked up to it, and under just as competent and highly skilled advice and oversight. If years I do not think the United States government would have found it necessary to send out its bulletin warning."

"As a definite example of what I mean, take a single illustration—that of Richard C. Morse, who was a famous oarsman on the Princeton crew five years ago. Today Mr. Morse is seventy-four years of age and as lively as a man who has kept up intelligent training throughout his entire lifetime. He still makes his regular, systematic exercise in the open air; he is still full about a proper and sufficient diet; he has been for half a century, gradually in quantity and quality, according to his needs as his years have advanced, and he has never used either tobacco or alcohol."

"What is the result of all this care, which really is no greater care than any other man should take who wishes to live out his appointed term of years on earth and to keep himself in such condition that he can do his work in the world?"

"The result is that during the last foot ball season Mr. Morse went down to Princeton to see a hard-fought battle between the team of that university and another. When the game was over he found that he had barely time to catch a train back to his home city, and without a thought of ill consequences he started on a swinging dog and ran all the way to the railroad station without a break. The distance, I might add, is not less than a mile, and Mr. Morse covered it without the slightest embarrassment in any way."

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Melted Away.

JOHN GRIER HIBBEN, president of Princeton University, said at the Lake Mohonk arbitration conference:

"The day is not yet come when violence and oppression will melt away before right like the plumber's bill."

"Like, I repeat, the plumber's bill. For a plumber, you know, once presented to a millionaire a bill of \$100 for mending a pipe."

"But the millionaire handed the plumber a dollar note and said severely: 'Receipt that bill of yours in full.'"

"But—but—'said the plumber. 'Receipt it in full,' the millionaire repeated. 'I used to be a plumber myself.'"

"The plumber at this gave a great start, recoiled and handed the millionaire 50 cents change."

The Peace-at-Any-Prices.

At the arbitration conference at Lake Mohonk last month many a bellicose note was struck.

"The day of international arbitration is not yet come," said Prof. John Bassett Moore of Columbia at a luncheon. "What is happening overseas today shows us clearly that the little girl was right in her scorn for the peace-at-any-price party."

"Suppose, my dear," said this little girl's teacher, "that a bad boy should strike you, and the next day you should give him an apple. Now that would be one way of returning good for evil, wouldn't it? And what do you think the bad boy would do then?"

"He'd strike me again, m'am," said the little girl, "to get another apple."

W. HART, A CHAMPION SINGLE-SCULLER.

"Competitive rowing constitutes an intense strain and should not be continued after a man reaches thirty," says one physical director.

average man. Of course, this should be true, as they are a selected class and must be more robust and stronger than the average."

"I am of the opinion that the national health service or any other group interested, if they will thoroughly investigate, can prove to their own satisfaction as well as others the fact that athletics increase the expectation of life. I think the fact that the early death of an athlete attracts attention is responsible for the thought that per-

of the game and widely heralded by the newspapers—all of which only serves for a greater incentive—but during these years he is accustomed his entire body system to regular and heavy exercise of the most violent sort. He goes out of college a highly trained athlete, with a habit of eating enormously, yet with no incentive to continue the hard physical exercise. What does he do? In almost all cases—at least in a very large majority of them—this young man settles down

is responsible for the thought that per-

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ATHLETES REQUIRE CONSTANT TRAINING. THIS PHOTO OF SPRINTERS WAS TAKEN WHEN THE ATHLETES WERE ABOARD SHIP BOUND FOR STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, TO ENTER THE OLYMPIC GAMES.

(Copyright by International News Service.)

CHICAGO, July 3.—Steve. Well Steve before a man gets married you ought to try and find out what kind of a girl you are marrying and if she ain't got no more sense a bout money than the most of them your better off if you don't get married unless you want to land out to the county farm.

Gussy landed an other higher girl last Mon. 1 that will cook and wash up the dishes and clean a round the house and so 4th. and all she gets is \$5.00 per wk. and yet they stick pick pockets in jale. Well I told Gussy to go a head and get a good 1 so I couldent say nothing when she told me how much was the going to pay this 1 but Gussy got a letter Thurs. from a friend of hers that got a cottage down to S. Haven Michigan and this here friend wanted Gussy should come up and spend the hole of July with she and her family. So Gussy come to me a bout it and ast me what I thot and I says sure go a head and you will have a good time besides saving me a little money because I will be on the rode all threw July and if your a way to we wont half a no expences accept the rent for the flat. You see Steve I had forgot all a bout this here new higher girl.

So Gussy wired a telegram back to S. Haven sane she would leave here yest. and then after she wired the telegram I thot a bout the higher girl so I says to Gussy what was we going to do a bout it. So Gussy says we didnt half to do nothing but just leave the girl stay in the flat and take care of it and I says yes but how much will she do it for. Well she do it for just her bord and Gussy says of coarse not we will half to pay her \$5.00 per wk. just like as if we was home. Well, I says will she buy her own groceries out of that and Gussy says no of coarse not but we would half to pay for what ever grocery bill she run up.

So then I says you must take me for a sucker pain a girl \$5.00 per wk. to make her self at home in our flat that wear pain \$25.00 per mo. rent for it and besides that pain her grocery bill for what ever she takes it in her head to eat and for all as we know she may buy lobsters and quale and sqabs and so 4th. like as we million heira. So Gussy says she would tell the girl to not spend more than she had to so Gussy left Fri. P. M. and when I got home Fri. night I got thinking a bout what a sucker play it was for me to be pain this here girl \$5.00 per wk. for cooking her own meals besides a grate big grocery bill and pain \$25.00 per mo. for a place for this here girl to live by her self a lone and pain Gussys fair to and from S. Haven and back and me tipping the waiters and going to a show onct in a wile on the rode. So I made it up in my mine that I wouldnt be no sucker like that but would talk to the girl and see what could I do with her.

Well Steve I been calling her a girl but shes old enough to be hane Wagners mother or ant only not no dutch man but grate big Irish woman that looks like she had larned to cook in a black Smiths shop. So after I ett supper and she was washing the dishes and I went out in the kitchen and I didnt know exactly how to open up so I stalled a round a wile and says how much rain we had been having and so 4th. and finly I says well it looks like we should ought to have some good wether this mo. because it must of rained it self out by this time and she didnt say nothing back so I says how would you like to have a vacation all thre July so she says what do you mean vacation so I says I should think you would get lene some and blew all cooped up here by your self and why dont you go home and stay all this mo. and then come back to work when I and the Mrs. gets back. So she says she couldent a ford to not do nothing so I says all right I dont want you to starve to deth so you can stay here and I will pay for your grocery bill or else I will give you \$5.00 per wk. and you can buy your own groceries. Then she swelled up like a poosed pup and says you wont do nothing of the kind because your wife says I was to get my reglar pa wile yer gone and you will half to pay for my bill down to the grocery store besides and if you dont like it you can pay me what I got coming and I will quit. Well Steve if I had of had any sense I would have left her quit but in sted of letting her quit I was to politte and didnt want to hurt her feelings so I says for her to not get sore because I didnt mean nothing but she could stay and I would pay for her grocery bills and all so give her \$4.00 per wk. and she says I wouldnt do nothing of the kind but I would give her the reglar \$5.00 and pay her bills to. Hows that for a grafter Steve and talk a bout Sherlocks but there good spenders compared to a woman unless shes spending some body else money. So I says all right then if you want to hold me up go a head and she didnt say nothing and shes pretty lucky I didnt fire her then and there and the only reason why I didnt is on acct. of hurting her feelings and I guess Im to soft harted. So I come a way out of the kitchen and left her and I went out and had a few and I told a friend of mine a bout it and he says I was a sucker and why didnt I fire her and I says I couldnt bare to hurt no bodys feelings even a Irish woman so he says well then wait till you go on to the rode and then write her a letter and can her so that sounded like a pretty good idear and I made it up in my mine to write to her from Pittsburgh.

But this A. M. I was looking for the paper and couldnt find it so I went out in the kitchen to see did she have it and I ast her if she had the paper and she says no she didnt have no use for no paper because she hadent never larned to read. Hows that for a fine mess for a man to be in and here Im going on the rode Tues. night to be a way a hole mo. and Gussys running up expences down to S. Haven and me pain rent and all so pain a higher girl and her grocery bills and cant fire her because if I wrote her a letter telling her she was fired she wouldnt know was it a letter or a package of seeds from some Congress man in Wash. A fine mess hey Steve and dont be suprised if you hear a bout me winding up in the poor mans house. Reepy.

BILL